REMARKS

BY

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INTERNET SOCIETY NAMIBIA CHAPTER

NAMPOWER CONVENTION

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Director   of   Ceremonies,
The UN Resident Cordinator in Namibia- Ms Kiki Gbeho -
The Internet Society Senior Policy Advisor for Africa- Mr Verengai
Mabika
The President of the Internet Society Namibia Chapter - Nashilongo
Gervasius.
Members of the Internet Society Namibia Chapter
Generals   of   Industries
Members   of the Media

Good morning – I am pleased to join you today and be part of this
great leap into the next level of engagement on internet matters in
Namibia. I would like to congratulate the Chapter members for a
very impressive work culminating into this launch today.

There is no doubt that the internet has evolved into an important
technological tool; transforming means of communication and
increasingly becoming a underpinning platform changing social,
economic and political engagements globally.

Fundamentally, it is clear that today's world requires new

thinking, new approaches and new models across the board and

this varies from Internet policy to addressing digital divides, from

security approaches to economic regulation.

The Internet Society plays a large role in the development of the Internet Ecosystem throughout the world. The internet Ecosystem is a descriptive term for Organisations and communities that guide the operation and development of the technologies and infrastructure that make up the internet.

The internet Society's operations in more than 160 countries, makes it an invaluable global partner for governments and other stakeholders.

DIRECTOR OF CEREMONIES

There is a direct link between the Internet availability and equitable development especially in developing countries such as ours. Opportunities of using the Internet for largely societal benefit and in particular for those most disadvantaged, are realized on a daily basis. Indeed the Internet plays a key role in facilitating good governance, improving education and health, transforming political processes and strengthening participation in decision-making processes.

For us as Namibians, we need to ensure that the internet becomes a transformative tool for social and economic development as set forth by the Vision 2030 – positioning Namibia to be a knowledge based society, enforced by the Harambee Prosperity Plan and annually ***supported* by** the National Development goals.

The Ministry of ICT, is working continuously to ensure that the development of the internet indeed benefits the End Users who are everyday Namibians seeking to improve their lives. As you might know by now, I have made it my personal goal to ensure that 100% of Namibia, is fully covered by Internet coverage.

With that in mind, I also take cognizance of the fact that, the success of the Internet should not be measured in terms of sheer numbers of connected individuals but more in terms of accessibility and contribution to social progress.

Going forward and more befitting to the new player (The Internet Society Namibia Chapter); that I am here to support its official entry into the Namibian space; we will be looking forward to informed inputs for the Data Protection Policy that we envision to start off soon. This is where Internet Society global reach and knowledge will come in handy in providing input on global best practices.

For your own information, the Ministry, has just finalized the consultation for the Electronic Transaction and Cybercrime Bill and is in the process of rounding up the Broadband Policy; whereby we are incorporating stakeholders inputs.

DIRECTOR OF CEREMONIES

It is a known fact that the youth are the "NETizens". You live the internet, breath the internet, sleep on the internet & wake up there. The question I have for you is, how can you use the Internet as a tool to develop yourselves, your communities and this country?

The chapter we are launching today is a result of youth interaction; a mere attendance of global events learning about the work of Internet Society and ambitioning to have a chapter in Namibia and within less than a year, Namibia is home to Africa's 32nd chapter. Fully chartered and legally registered as a not – for – profit Association of enthusiasts. This is what we need as a country, to seize opportunities with the benefit of motherland in mind and the context of our people. I salute and congratulate the Namibian youth for making us proud of Africa through this chapter.

As I move towards concluding, I welcome the Namibian Chapter of the Internet Society, we have a commitment from this multistakeholder organization; to work together, collaborate and through your reach provide resources to enrich our existing internet ecosystem. Yes, I say we because Government is a stakeholder in the internet ecosystem too.

As Namibians we are glad that finally there is a platform where users and technocrats alike can meet monthly and discuss issues pertaining to the internet. Of core to us government as a stakeholder, is the issue of content creation on the Internet by Namibians for the Namibians and the world. Let's have Namibian content on the internet.

I am informed, amongst the chapters goals are issues of promotion of the role of local languages and the Namibianisation of the internet to make the internet work and provide solutions to our local challenges.

We hope you remain to exemplary champion this Multistakeholder approach to the internet, especially in policy issues which is key in a world in which the physical and the digital worlds converge and the borderless nature of Internet challenges becomes clear.

I hope as a Chapter made up of members of multi-stakeholders, you are ready to take over the organization and hosting of the Namibia Internet Governance Forum that I also launched its inaugural Forum a month or so ago. It would only make sense to do so as the Forum is also a multistakeholder platform,while Internet Governance features distinctively as a key primary focus area of the Internet Society globally.

DIRECTOR OF CEREMONIES

With that said, let me do what I am tasked to do here, which is to launch the Internet Society Namibia Chapter and officially welcome it into the Namibian Internet space.

I'm therefore pleased to declare the Internet Society's 140th Chapter and Africa's 32nd Chapter…opened… Go and do the real work. Namibia is waiting.

I   thank you